

Move Will Boost Alexandria Tax Base

Materiel Command to Be Relocated

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The U.S. Army Materiel Command, now housed in World War II temporary buildings at National Airport, will be relocated in a new office building to be built in Alexandria's Capital Beltway corridor, city and federal officials said yesterday.

The agency's move to a privately owned building is expected to cost at least \$10 million and will give a significant boost to Alexandria's property tax base. The move also may result in the razing of the bleak-looking temporary buildings now lining George Washington Memorial Parkway at the airport.

The impending relocation was first announced by City Councilman Wiley F. Mitchell Jr. He has headed a long campaign by Alexandria officials to win a bigger share of government office space in privately owned buildings leased by the General Services Administration.

A GSA spokesman said the agency has advertised for 455,326 square feet of office space to accommodate the Materiel Command and will not locate the building anywhere but in Alexandria. Two proposals to construct the buildings have been made and will be reviewed by the GSA Jan. 21, the spokesman said.

The spokesman would not identify the bidders, but there are only two building permits currently listed in Alexandria for structures large enough to accommodate the agency. GSA requires bidders to have building permits in hand.

Both were issued Dec. 29. One went to real estate investor Hubert Hoffman for a 13-story building on Eisenhower Avenue east of Telegraph Road and the other to the LNT Corp. for an 11-story building on Eisenhower Avenue south of the Army's Cameron Station supply depot.

Each application estimated the cost of the building at \$10

million. Permit estimates usually are conservative.

In their campaign for GSA-leased space, city officials have argued that Alexandria has done a better job than any other suburban Washington jurisdiction of meeting the need for low-and moderate-income housing, but has fared the worst in the competition for federal agencies.

GSA has been criticized for moving large agencies out of Washington and into high-priced housing areas, such as Montgomery County, without regard for low-income black employees who cannot afford to commute long distances or to buy suburban housing.

Alexandria's supply of low-and moderate-income housing is not sufficient to meet the demand. But in their campaign for office space, officials cited the city's 1,034 public housing units, the City Council's encouragement of housing projects that offer federal rent and mortgage payment subsidies, and a significant

supply of moderately priced private housing in the city's northeast and southern sections.

The city campaign also included complaints to GSA that millions of square feet in government office space has been leased in Arlington's Rosslyn and Crystal City areas in recent years, although there is no publicly assisted housing in the county.

The Materiel Command directs development, production, procurement and maintenance of all materials used by the Army.

The headquarters at National Airport employs 2,803 persons, all but 304 of them civilians. It has been located in temporary building T-7 for nine years.

GSA officials could not confirm yesterday that T-7 would be demolished after the new building is occupied, but the government has followed a policy in recent years of razing temporary buildings as agencies are relocated.

Ed. Construction Costs

\$ 21.97 per sq ft